10/685,337

Office Actions and Notice of Allowances Previously Mailed to areas of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Affected by Hurricane Katrina

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) considers the effects of Hurricane Katrina to be an "extraordinary situation" within the meaning of 37 CFR 1.183 for the affected applicants. For applications pending in the Office as of September 1, 2005 having a correspondence address in the affected areas of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi in which a reply to an Office action (final, non-final, or other), a notice of allowance, or other Office notice is outstanding, and has not yet expired, the USPTO is withdrawing the Office action, notice of allowance, or other Office notice, and re-issuing an Office action, notice of allowance, or other Office notice as applicable. On September 1, 2005, the USPTO ceased mailing of correspondences to the affected zip codes listed below. *See* MPEP § 710.06 (Situations When Reply Period Is Reset or Restarted).

The United States Postal Service (USPS) has indicated that there is a service interruption in the areas of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi affected by Hurricane Katrina. Therefore, the USPTO is withdrawing the previous Office action, notice of allowance, or other Office notice, and re-issuing an Office action, notice of allowance, or other Office notice as applicable in its image file wrapper (IFW) of the application, for applications having a correspondence address in the following USPS zip codes in Alabama, Louisiana, or Mississippi: 36XXX, 39XXX, 700XX, 701XX, 702XX, 703XX, and 704XX. This Official Gazette notice is the notice required by 35 U.S.C. 133 and 37 CFR 1.33 because the usual mailing of a notice of this actions (*i.e.*, mailing a copy of the re-issued Office action) would be futile because of the USPS service interruption.

Applicants may view the notice restarting the period for reply and the Office action, notice of allowance or other Office notice in their application via the private side of the USPTO's Patent Application Inspection Retrieval (PAIR) system. Applicants who do not currently have access to the private side of the USPTO's PAIR system will still be able to view the notice restarting the period for reply and the Office action, notice of allowance, or other Office notice in published applications via the public side of the USPTO's PAIR system.

Inquiries concerning this notice, or on how to obtain access to the private side of the USPTO PAIR system, may be directed to a legal advisor in the Office of Patent Legal Administration, at 877-PTO-NORL (877-786-6675) or 571-272-7704, or by e-mail at PatentPractice@uspto.gov.

Date: 9/15/05 John Doll

John Doll
Commissioner for Patents

The period for reply set in the previous Office action or notice, or notice of allowance, in the above- identified application is restarted to begin with the SEP 15 2005 date of this communication.